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State Department review completed

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
15 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 41
(As of 2230 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. Both fronts were relatively quiet this evening with little ground or air action, as both Israeli and Arab forces regrouped after the heavy fighting on Sunday. Tel Aviv said its forces were consolidating and slowly advancing on the Syrian front today. Defense Minister Dayan stated that the Syrians had been pushed back far enough so that Israel could give the highest priority to the Suez front. The Jordanian brigade had not yet been engaged by Israeli forces as of this evening.

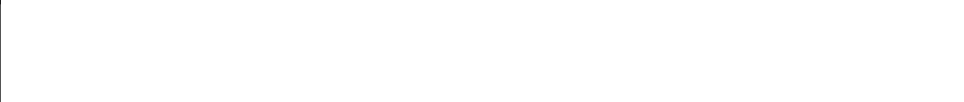
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2.

there are two reasons for the hiatus in the offensive against Damascus: the Israeli shortage of equipment--they cannot afford to be profligate with their tanks and aircraft, and the need to consider future relations with Syria.

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THE EGYPTIAN FRONT

4. Air and ground activity was light this evening as both Egyptians and Israelis regrouped following the intense fighting of 14 October.



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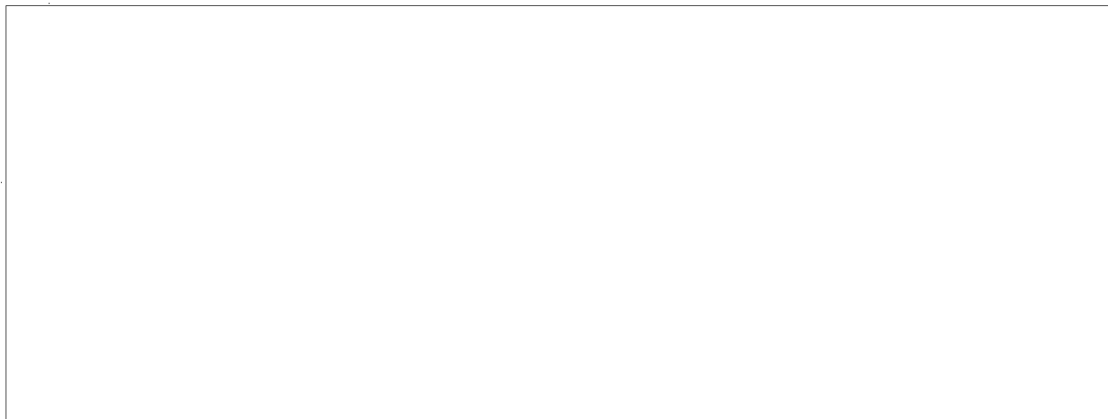
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9. Al Ahram, the semi-official Cairo newspaper, today stated that the main objective of the present Egyptian offensive is to seize control of the Mitla and Gidi passes.

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THE SYRIAN FRONT

12. Fighting on the Syrian front continued to be light this evening. Israeli forces slowly broadened their salient in the northern sector during the day, while the Syrians yielded little or no ground in the southern sector. A UN source reports that the battle line south of the Damascus-Qunaytirah road still follows the 1967 cease-fire line.

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13. Although there have been some Israeli reports of abandoned Syrian tanks, Syrian forces have not broken and are continuing to maintain their discipline. The Israeli forces continue to encounter stiff Syrian resistance along the front, and there have been no reports of entire units surrendering as occurred in the 1967 war.

14. Israeli Defense Minister Dayan stated today that Syrian forces had been pushed back far enough into Syria so that Israel could now give the highest priority to the Suez front.

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16.

Tel Aviv intends to block the formation of any "effective international Arab legion" on the Syrian front by striking each national force separately before they can become united. The Israeli expressed concern that Syrian forces might get a breather by using the other Arab forces. He estimated that as many as 100 tanks per day are being unloaded from Soviet ships, and the Syrians may be able to reform one of their armored divisions if given sufficient time. Although his estimate of tank imports probably is exaggerated, Syria is more likely to use its own forces rather than other Arabs for any defense of Damascus.

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17. The Israeli briefer claimed that as part of Tel Aviv's strategy, Israeli armored forces had attacked and destroyed two thirds of the Iraqi brigade, including 30 tanks. He said the Jordanian force was still 20 kilometers away from the nearest

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[REDACTED]

Israeli force and was considered unpredictable because it was under the operational command of an Iraqi division. There is no other evidence that the Jordanian brigade is subordinate to Iraqi command. The Israeli described the rest of the force as slightly better than motley, consisting of Saudi armored car and recoilless rifle units, part of a Kuwaiti armored brigade, and possibly the Sixth Iraqi armored division and another armored brigade.

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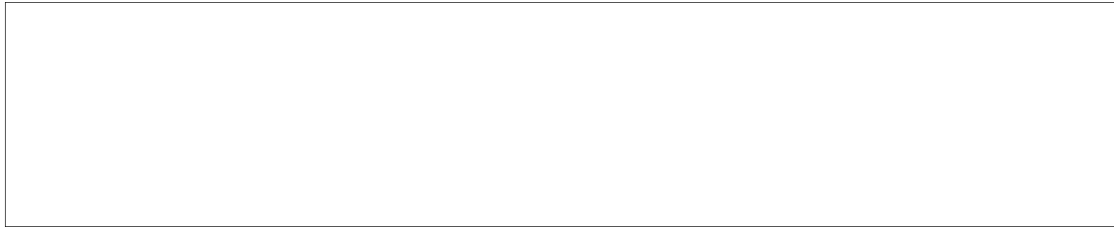
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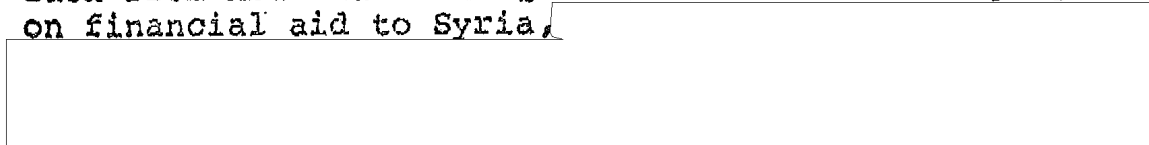
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ARAB STATES -

26. The ruler of Kuwait has called the National Assembly into session tomorrow to discuss Kuwaiti financial support for the Arab war effort. A Kuwait English-language newspaper, citing official Cairo sources, has reported that the Arab states have contributed \$920 million to the Egyptian war effort. According to the press account, Egypt has received \$300 million from Saudi Arabia, \$250 million from Kuwait, \$170 million from Libya, and \$100 million each from Abu Dhabi and Qatar. There is no wrap-up on financial aid to Syria.



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LEBANON

27. The situation in Beirut remains relatively calm, although the US Embassy reports that the American community is becoming nervous. Agitators are calling for anti-US activity, but the embassy has no evidence of harassment of Americans. On 14 October, the Sunni Muslim Grand Mufti addressed a rally, warning the US of the "consequences of its continued military assistance to Israel."

THE MOOD IN EAST JERUSALEM

28. The Arab population of East Jerusalem and the West Bank is not posing a security threat to Israel, and Tel Aviv has so far not clamped any harsh

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restrictions on the Arabs. Ordinary Arabs are expressing concern about the future, but some Jordanian-oriented notables are gratified that King Husayn has decided to enter the conflict, although they are relieved that fighting is not near Jerusalem.

29. Many Arab workers in Jerusalem are reported staying away from their jobs, in part at the urging of Radio Amman and Cairo's Voice of Palestine. The broadcasts have been telling the Arabs that to remain on the job is a sign of disloyalty to the Arab cause. The US Consul in Jerusalem is hearing complaints that flour cannot be bought in East Jerusalem and that sugar and kerosene are in short supply. West Jerusalem stores seem to be adequately stocked, however.

30. Party representatives in the Knesset are drafting a bill to postpone until mid-December parliamentary and local elections that were scheduled for 30 October. Tel Aviv earlier had called a halt to election campaigning. Prime Minister Meir is to speak to the Knesset on 16 October and may announce the postponement.

SOVIET PRESS

31. Three brief Moscow press releases have announced the US decision to mount military resupply operations to Israel, but we have not received any official Soviet reaction or commentary. Premier Kosygin did not refer to the resumption of US deliveries in a speech tonight at a dinner in honor of visiting Danish Prime Minister Jorgensen. Kosygin pledged continued support for the Arab cause and blamed the Israelis for the renewed fighting. He also expressed some concern that the "opponents of detente" would use the Middle East crisis as a pretext to revive the cold war.

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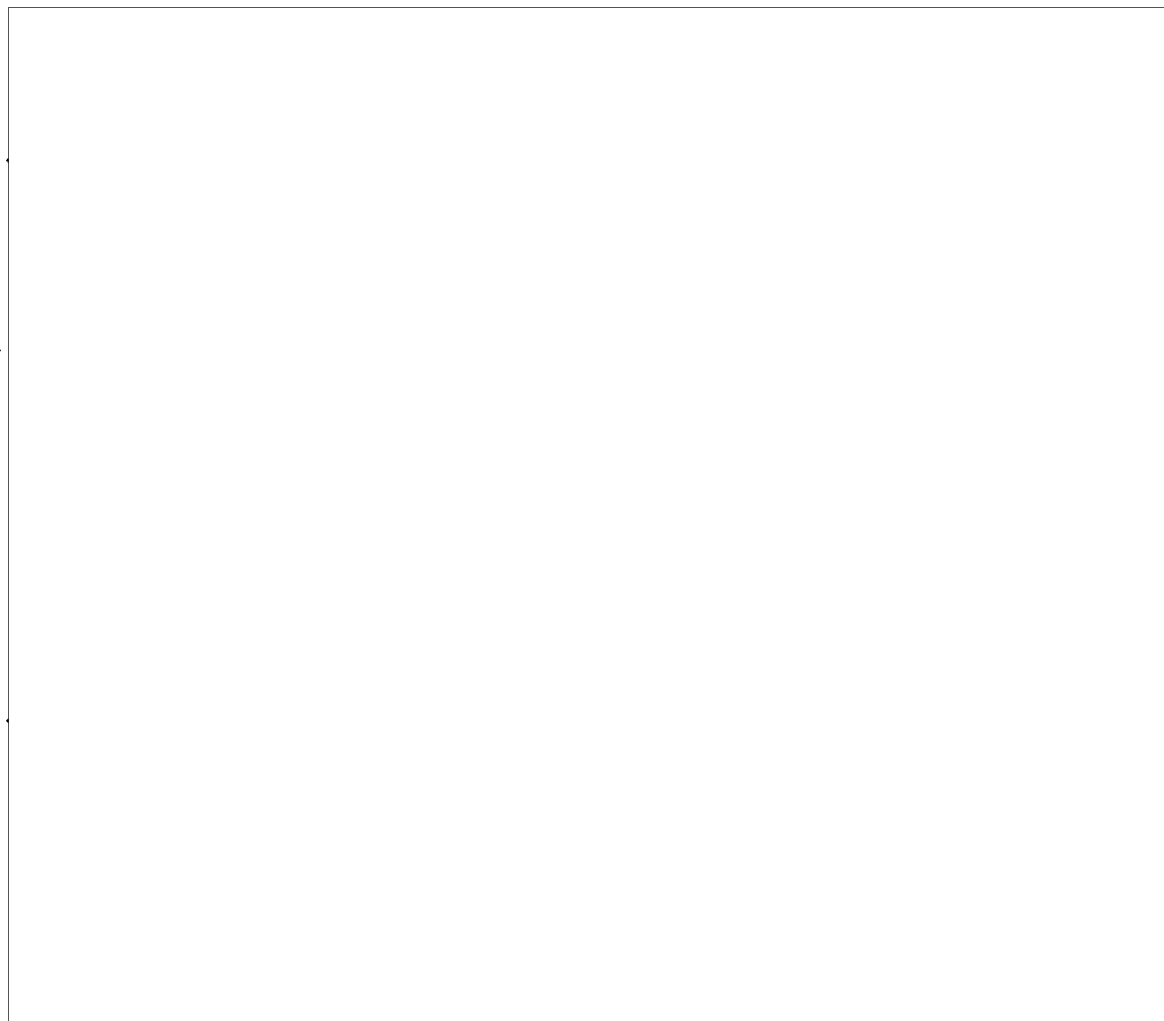
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ANNEX A

ARAB REACTION TO US RESUPPLY OF ISRAEL



4. There have been no reactions from Cairo to the US decision, but an Egyptian spokesman issued a moderately worded statement today, probably before

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Marwan's return to Cairo, protesting continuing reports that the US intended to resupply Israel. Noting that it is regrettable that the US does not distinguish between "those who are fighting to consolidate their occupation of usurped land and those who are fighting to liberate this land," the spokesman said that the "peoples of the world" had expected the US to uphold the principles of the UN charter, particularly the principle of the non-acquisition of territory by force. The US Interests Section notes that Cairo press coverage of US aid to Israel was less extensive today than in

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6. Other Persian Gulf states have issued statements protesting the US resupply efforts, and the moderate oil producers have indicated to Western oilmen that they might be forced to take action against Western oil interests in order to safeguard their own positions. In this context, the Kuwaiti oil minister has stressed that he called the OAPEC conference, now scheduled for Wednesday, as a pre-emptive gesture to keep the oil "weapon" out of radical hands; he and other moderates hoped before the US officially began the airlift that by stopping short of nationalizations or drastic production cutbacks they could aid the

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Arab cause and keep their domestic positions as well as maintain reasonably good relations with the US. The situation may now have changed.

7. An Israeli spokesman, in the meantime, in a possible effort to help get the US off the hook to some extent, announced today that the approximately 30,000 American volunteers who have asked to go to Israel will not be allowed to join the army, even in positions at the rear. He cited specifically in this regard American veterans of the Vietnam war, who have been widely rumored in the Arab world to be piloting Israeli and/or US Phantoms in attacks against Arab positions. The Israeli demurral will probably not deter Arab propagandists; the Egyptians are reportedly circulating among some Arab governments copies of interrogation reports from captured Israeli pilots who allegedly admit that they have fought in Vietnam.

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